Appl. No.:   10/014,943
Amdt. dated May 21, 2004
Reply to Office action of March 24, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant received the Office Action dated March 24, 2004, in which the Examiner: (1) rejected claims 1-5, 8-11, 14-16, 24-25 and 28 as anticipated by Cromer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,256,732); and (2) rejected claims 17-23 and 29-33 as obvious in view of Cromer. In this Response, Applicant amends claim 1, 17-25 and 29. Based on the amendments and arguments contained herein, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims.

I.   CLAIM REJECTIONS

A.   Claim 1

Amended claim 1, in part, requires a "management device" wherein "host-specific information is stored in the management device sub-system during a boot process of the host computer and wherein the management device uses the host-specific information to manage a function that the host computer would otherwise manage." Cromer does not teach or suggest these limitations.

Cromer teaches that, while still in a shipping box, a computer system 12 is configurable by a main computer 102 via a flap 28 formed in the box. Using a communication subsystem with auxiliary power, the computer system 12 can automatically provide its capabilities to the main computer 102 without powering on (see col. 2, lines 32-35). After receiving the computer system's capabilities, the main computer 102 configures the computer system 12 by waking up the computer system 12 and storing an image in the hard drive of the computer system 12 (see col. 10, lines 11-46).

Cromer does not teach "[a] management device [that] uses the host-specific information to manage a function that the host computer would otherwise manage" as required in claim 1. Neither the LAN subsystem 94 nor the main computer 102 taught in Cromer "[manages] a function that the host computer would otherwise manage" as required in claim 1. Specifically, Cromer teaches the LAN subsystem 94 establishes valid links (i.e., manages a function) for the computer 12 (see col. 8, lines 22-58). However, Cromer does not teach or suggest that the computer 12 "would otherwise manage" the function as required in claim 1. Further, Cromer teaches that the main computer 102 prepares a

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"custom image" (see col. 10, lines 11-19) and stores the custom image in a hard drive of the host computer 12. However, Cromer does not teach or suggest that the host computer 12 would "otherwise manage" the function managed by the main computer 102. Rather, Cromer implies that the custom image preparation managed by the main computer 102 would not otherwise be managed by the host computer 12 (see Fig. 9 and col. 10, lines 11-46). For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that claim 1 and all claims that depend from claim 1 are allowable.

B.   Claim 17

Claim 17 was amended, at least in part logic, to replace "logic unit" with "logic unit sub-system." Amended claim 17, in part, requires "[a] logic unit sub-system [that] is adapted to couple to a host computer system and store a table containing host computer information in the memory during a power on self test of the host computer system whereby the logic unit sub-system uses the table to manage a function that the host computer system would otherwise manage."

For at least the reasons described above, with respect to claim 1, Cromer does not teach or suggest "a logic unit sub-system" that "store[s] a table containing host computer information in the memory during a power on self test of the host computer system" and "uses the table to manage a function that the host computer system would otherwise manage" as required in claim 17. For at least this reason, Applicant submits that claim 17 and all claims that depend from claim 17 are allowable.

C.   Claim 24

Claim 24 was amended, at least in part, to replace "uploading" with "storing" to ensure proper antecedent basis. Amended claim 24, in part, requires "searching for host computer specific information during a boot process of the host computer" and "using the information during the operation of the logic unit to independently control a function that the host computer would otherwise control." For at least the reasons given above, with respect to claim 1, Cromer does not teach or suggest these limitations. In particular, neither the LAN subsystem 94 nor the main computer 102 taught in Cromer "[use] the information during the operation of the logic unit to independently control a function that the host

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computer would otherwise control." For at least this reason, Applicant submits that claim 24 and all claims that depend from claim 24 are allowable.

D.   Claim 29

Amended claim 29, in part, requires "a management unit coupled to the peripheral interface of the host computer, the management unit accesses and stores the information table during a boot process of the host computer such that the management unit is operable to carry out a predetermined management responsibility that the host computer would otherwise carry out." For at least the reasons described above, with respect to claim 1, Applicant submits that claim 29 and all claims that depend from claim 29 are allowable.

II.   CONCLUSIONS

In the course of the foregoing discussions, Applicant may have at times referred to claim limitations in shorthand fashion, or may have focused on a particular claim element. This discussion should not be interpreted to mean that the other limitations can be ignored or dismissed. The claims must be viewed as a whole, and each limitation of the claims must be considered when determining the patentability of the claims. Moreover, it should be understood that there may be other distinctions between the claims and the cited art which have yet to be raised, but which may be raised in the future.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any fees or time extensions are inadvertently omitted or if any fees have been overpaid, please appropriately charge or credit those fees to Hewlett-Packard Company Deposit Account Number 08-2025 and enter any time extension(s) necessary to prevent this case from being abandoned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan M. Harris
PTO Reg. No. 44,144
CONLEY ROSE, P.C.

HEWLETT-PACKARD COMPANY
Intellectual Property Administration
Legal Dept., M/S 35
P.O. Box 272400
Fort Collins, CO 80527-2400

(713) 238-8000 (Phone)
(713) 238-8008 (Fax)
ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT